

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Delete the paragraph on page 2, lines 6-11, and substitute the following paragraph:

--According to the present invention, a method of manufacturing optical identification elements comprises forming a diffraction grating in a fiber substrate along a longitudinal axis of said substrate, said grating having a resultant refractive index variation; and cutting the substrate transversely to form a plurality of optical identification elements, said elements having said grating therein along substantially the entire length of said elements and each of said elements have substantially the same resultant refractive index variation.--

Page 6, lines 22-25:

--The optical identification element 8 described herein is the same as that described in Copending Patent Application Serial No. 10/661,234 (~~CiDRA Docket No. CC-0648A~~), filed contemporaneously herewith, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.--

Page 17, lines 1-8:

--second a spool 936. The fiber 830 is then cut off the spool 936 with a blade 938 in a plurality of strips 940 of fiber that are flattened out. The strips of fibers are then cut or diced with a blade 942.

If the microbeads 8 should be used to perform a chemical experiment or assay similar to that described in US Patent Application No. 10/661,031 ~~CiDRA Docket No. CC-0649A~~) and US Patent Application No. 10/661,115 ~~CiDRA Docket No. CC-0651A~~), both filed contemporaneously, which are incorporated herein by reference, the probe compound or chemical may be coated or applied to the fiber or microbeads at any step in the process of manufacture of the microbeads described hereinbefore.--